

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The tragic shootings at Virginia Tech on April 16, 2007, shocked the nation, including those of us who work in student affairs. In the fall of 2007, NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education president Jan Walbert convened a working group of student affairs colleagues with senior leadership experience (see Appendix A) to identify the critical issues student affairs colleagues should consider related to violent incidents on college campuses. This group was charged with examining the various reports in the past year and best practices in this area and developing guiding principles for practice from a student affairs perspective for the NASPA membership. The results of the group's deliberations were originally shared in draft form with NASPA leaders, as well as with the membership at large. Given the continued focus on higher education on campus violence, that original report has been revised to speak to a wider audience.

This report presents a framework of planning for and responding to emergencies such as incidents of violence using a crisis management model. This model provides four phases in which to discuss violence: (1) prevention, (2) preparedness, (3) response, and (4) recovery. The following topics are presented in summary format as a guide to the full discussion:

- I. Prevention
 - a. Campus climate and culture: Emerging practices to consider
 - i. Place more focus on programs regarding men and violence.
 - ii. Continue to develop innovative discipline sanctions.
 - iii. Explore conflict resolution processes such as healing circles and bullying theory.
 - iv. Map incidents of violence on campus, and use the information to inform decision making.
 - v. Explore creating a national clearinghouse for data on incidents of violence on K–12 and college campuses.
 - b. Training and awareness
 - i. Student affairs must play a lead role in developing and presenting training opportunities related to campus violence for students, families, faculty, and staff.

Feedback on this report or examples of best practices should be directed to NASPA–Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education by e-mail at office@naspa.org



- ii. Students should be considered part of prevention and trained to recognize signs of distress in fellow students.
 - iii. Campus security or police should be accredited whenever possible.
 - iv. Graduate preparation programs should address issues of campus violence.
 - v. Update training for all staff on Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act guidelines.
 - c. Mental and behavioral interventions
 - i. Use a model, such as the Assessment Intervention of Student Problems, as a framework to address behavior.
 - ii. Train all staff in using the model.
 - iii. Establish a threat assessment team that uses a behavior intervention model.
 - d. Infrastructure and policy
 - i. Consider background checks in the admissions process.
 - ii. Err on the side of sharing more information rather than less when it relates to matters of campus safety.
 - iii. Advocate for clarification of local or state policy and laws that impede campus safety.
 - iv. Do not permit firearms on campus with the exception of those carried by law enforcement officers.
- II. Preparedness: Develop plans, assemble the teams, and train personnel to respond to a variety of crisis events.
 - a. Role of the institution's president: Clarify if the president or other senior leader will lead the response team and what his or her role will be in communications.
 - b. Campus police/security
 - i. Establish perimeters and secure buildings as quickly as possible.
 - ii. Develop mutual aid agreements and practice active shooter and other large-scale emergency scenarios.
 - iii. Participate in National Incident Management System training on a regular basis.
 - c. Communications plan
 - i. Move the ability to issue campus warning to the most appropriate level in the organization to be operationally effective.
 - ii. Message systems need to be multimodal with built-in redundancy.
 - iii. Prepare in advance basic, clear, and concise template messages.
 - d. Special considerations in mass casualties
 - i. Establish a private family room for university personnel and family members only.
 - ii. Identify an individual liaison for each family affected, and provide training in advance for this pool of staff.

- iii. Establish an emergency call center in advance, and train staff to operate it.
 - e. Media
 - i. Determine institutional and divisional spokespersons in advance, and provide media relations training.
 - ii. Identify others, including student leaders, in advance, and provide media relations training.
 - iii. Determine appropriate areas for media to operate, and manage their operations.
 - iv. Set appropriate boundaries for the media, including making residence halls private, to enable some privacy for the campus community.
 - f. Academic affairs and faculty
 - i. Use new-faculty orientation to clarify roles and expectations.
 - ii. Identify specific resources for faculty to identify troubled students and refer them appropriately.
 - iii. Involve faculty in developing crisis response procedures.
 - g. Training
 - i. Train team members on all plans and protocols so they understand their roles and responsibilities.
 - ii. Use table-top exercises and actual simulations.
- III. Response: Responding to high-stress situations will place enormous demands on all levels of staff in student affairs and across the institution.
 - a. Timely notification of students
 - i. Err on the side of sending brief, factual messages as soon as appropriate.
 - ii. Follow-up messages are essential.
 - iii. Keep the Web site home page up to date.
 - b. Responding to the needs of students
 - i. Respond to the varying needs of all constituents.
 - ii. Consider consortium agreements with other colleges and universities in the local area or state to provide immediate emergency personnel.
 - iii. Turn to local clergy as additional resources.
 - c. International: Crisis abroad
 - i. It may be necessary for a representative of the college and universities to travel immediately.
 - ii. One or more office members of the dean of students should be prepared with up-to-date passport and other information for immediate travel abroad.
- IV. Recovery
 - a. Moving forward
 - i. Solicit the involvement of alumni in response and recovery.
 - ii. Pay particular attention to student leaders and groups connected to the event.

- b. Psychological first aid
 - i. Pay attention to the student affairs team and other crisis responders on campus: the psychological and emotional trauma associated with dealing with these events will need to be addressed.
 - ii. Use community resources and other colleges and universities to augment and assist in providing for care for the responding team.
- c. Process: Learning from incident
 - i. Each situation provides opportunities for learning: student affairs professionals must critique themselves and be open to listening to feedback from others.
 - ii. Be mindful of how vigils and other remembrances are conducted and memorials constructed.
 - iii. Have a variety of ongoing support mechanisms to assist community members in finding the appropriate support for their specific needs.
 - iv. Provide relief staff to allow those who have dealt with the crisis time off to move on.
 - v. Remember that it is possible to take a tragic situation and create a new tradition or a new cultural norm.
 - vi. Remember that students and campuses are resilient.

Introduction

Violence has been pervasive throughout history, and today is no different. It is also part of the context of higher education, and those of us who work in student affairs experience its manifestations frequently on college campuses. Weapons have become more dangerous and more readily available; the media are more invasive, persuasive, and immediate; expectations from parents demand that we again act in loco parentis; and overlapping federal and state laws on health and privacy are confusing and in conflict with one another.

The tragic shootings at Virginia Tech on April 16, 2007, shocked the nation. The magnitude of loss of life added new challenges to the already difficult task of responding to the death of one student. From the initial response, to dealing with the media and families, to managing the campus and beyond, thousands of decisions had to be made and executed. Over the subsequent months, the president of the United States, the governor of Virginia, and the president of Virginia Tech commissioned reports on what happened and what could be learned from this incident. The U.S. Congress as well as many states held hearings on this issue, making recommendations around campus safety, mental health issues, and emergency response. Throughout 2007 and early 2008, several other campuses experienced shootings (Delaware State, University of Chicago, Louisiana State University, and Northern Illinois University, to name a few), and each time, campuses were criticized for their actions. Indeed, the Virginia Tech incident can be viewed as a tipping point in higher education, whereby a serious tragedy focused attention on mental health issues and campus safety.

In fall 2007, NASPA–Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education president Jan Walbert convened a working group of student affairs colleagues with senior leadership experience (see Appendix A) to identify the critical issues we in student affairs should consider related to violent incidents on campuses. This group was charged with (1) examining the various reports in the past several months and best practices in this area and (2) developing guiding principles for practice from a student affairs perspective for the NASPA membership.

Recognizing the diversity of the NASPA membership, the participants of the group included representatives of small and community colleges, as well as large universities. The NASPA liaison to the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission attended, as well as a director of a large counseling center. One member had been present at the 1970 Kent State shootings and another at the 1999 Texas A&M bonfire tragedy. The group thus had a significant level of experience planning for and managing incidents of violence on college campuses.

The group read various reports and documents as references, including the full report of the review panel (August 2007) from Virginia Tech and information on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA),

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). *Dealing with the Behavioral and Psychological Problems of Students* (Delworth, 1989), although published twenty years ago, was found to have continued profound connections to our work today.

The group met in Chicago in early December 2007 for discussions and to outline the key issues and suggest recommendations for best practices in student affairs. We focused on emerging trends in student affairs practice, not on providing an exhaustive emergency planning document. Furthermore, to add continuity between this document and other emergency planning documents, we placed our recommendations within a crisis management model used by the U.S. Department of Education (2007)** and U.S. Department of Homeland Security (2003).** Three group members drafted the report and received feedback from the others. We initially presented this work as a draft, soliciting feedback to further refine our work from colleagues at the March 2008 NASPA annual conference in Boston. We continue to be interested in collecting and highlighting examples of best practices related to the topics presented here. We provide some examples of emerging or best practice for consideration and seek your input to create a resource database at www.naspa.org/enough/resources.cfm

Principles That Guided Our Discussions. When our group met in December 2007, we established a set of guiding principles for our work together:

1. We recognize that all situations are unique and all campuses are unique. Nevertheless, there are some commonalities in events and issues that can be planned for within a model. We were brought together to talk about violence, and there are many other types of emergencies, including hate crimes and sexual assaults, that demand our attention. This report will not address all emergencies but will focus on issues of violence.
2. There is no single best answer to a problem or emergency. Decision making at the local level will come with practice, based on guidance from professional associations, best practice, and state and federal agencies.
3. We can work hard to take care of our students, but we cannot prevent every act of violent behavior on our campuses. We need to keep reminding ourselves and others that we are doing the best that we can. And we will continue to learn from one another.
4. We recognize that a variety of roles exists within student affairs, sometimes in conflict with each other. We need to continue to work toward a greater understanding of laws and norms or ways of practice (for

Note: Double asterisks have been inserted in the text as an alert to refer to Appendix B for a relevant model or reference.

- example, how we implement FERPA) to clarify roles and expectations for the future.
5. Throughout our discussions, we encountered confusion about terminology. We therefore suggest being as clear about definitions as possible, for example, campus closed versus classes cancelled, or suspension versus involuntary withdrawal.
 6. We know there is a link between alcohol and campus violence. Therefore, any consideration about best practices for managing violence must also address the issue of alcohol use.
 7. We know there is a link between firearms and campus violence. As an organization, we believe NASPA should advocate that firearms be prohibited from the general population on the campus.
 8. The work about violence must start in the K–12 school environment, and we need to partner with secondary educators to understand K–12 research and practice around issues such as bullying and peer mediation.
 9. The vast majority of people with mental health issues are not violent. The ADA has enabled more students to be successful on campus. We have expanded our support services for students with disabilities and welcome their full participation in all aspects of the academic community.

This report does not offer an exhaustive list of recommendations or resources. Nevertheless, it provides a helpful discussion point for student affairs teams. We chose to write in a less academic style and have not provided exhaustive citations. Instead, we created the annotated resource list in Appendix B as a guide to more information and sources.

In this report, we discuss a framework of planning for and responding to emergencies such as incidents of violence: the crisis management model. We then highlight some of the key issues related to the particular situations of interpersonal violence experienced in the year immediately preceding the group's work, some of the lessons learned, and emerging trends for practice in student affairs. Topics include communications, mental health issues, training and awareness, roles of various personnel, and policy changes. We provide recommendations and suggestions, while recognizing that each campus has a unique culture and governance structure, and a particular recommendation may not fit every context. Finally, we acknowledge issues that need future exploration.

Crisis Management Model. Campus crisis management is not a singular set of actions after which a campus can be declared prepared. Instead, crisis management is an ongoing, cyclical, and adaptive process through which a campus seeks to continuously improve its ability to either avoid or manage the impact of a crisis event. The crisis management process often is described in the literature in terms of a series of stages or phases in which actions taken in one phase build on actions taken in the previous one. A common phased model of crisis management adopted by the U.S.

Department of Homeland Security (2003)** and the U.S. Department of Education (2007)** is depicted in Figure 1. The model has four phases: (1) prevention, (2) preparedness, (3) response, and (4) recovery.

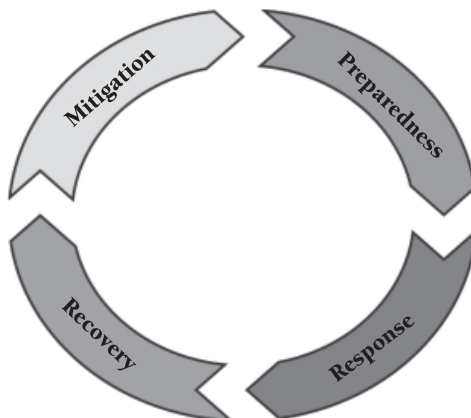
In the prevention phase a campus seeks to identify actions or strategies to prevent potential crisis events from occurring or at least mitigate the impact of such events if they do occur. This is an important yet often overlooked phase of the crisis management process. Campuses must constantly monitor their environment for potential situations or events that could threaten the campus community.

Recognizing that not all crisis events can be prevented, campuses must also prepare for likely crisis events. During the preparedness phase, campuses develop plans and train personnel to respond to a variety of potential crisis events. If such an event occurs, campuses implement the plans and protocols they have developed in the preparedness phase.

The response phase consists of the actions taken and decisions made during the actual crisis event. It may happen during the course of a few hours or perhaps a few days.

The recovery phase may last for weeks, months, or even years. It consists of the actions and decisions made in the aftermath of the crisis that are focused on returning the campus community to a sense of normalcy. As part of the recovery process, a campus will take a critical look at its response efforts and use this information to improve its future prevention efforts. In this way, crisis management becomes a cyclical process in which one phase leads to the next, thereby creating a continuous improvement process.

Figure 1. Crisis Management Model



Source: Harper, Paterson, and Zdziarski (2006). Reprinted by permission.

Campus violence is a particular type of crisis event. In presenting what we see as emerging practices and recommendations for addressing campus violence, we believe it is useful to present them within the framework of this model. In this way, we hope to provide campus administrators with information that fits within a structure consistent with what other experts and governmental agencies are communicating to campus leaders.

Prevention

Just as Alfred Hitchcock observed that the perfect crime is one that no one knows has been committed, the best practice of campus crisis management is evidenced by the violence that is averted or minimized. Although there is a role for student affairs professionals to play in all phases of crisis management on campus, none is more important than the role student affairs can and should play in the prevention phase. We have identified four foci for student affairs professional practice as it relates to the prevention of campus violence: campus climate and culture, training and awareness, mental health and behavioral interventions, and infrastructure and policy.

Campus Climate and Culture. Although there is much still to be learned with regard to the environmental and individual circumstances that contribute to acts of campus violence, it appears clear that fostering a caring campus community is a powerful strategy for the prevention and mitigation of such acts. This is not to say that communities where incidents of campus violence have taken place were not caring communities or that caring communities are immune to violence. We argue, however, that a caring community is less likely to experience such violence and is better able to respond to and recover from an incident of violence should one occur. The UNCG Cares** program at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro is a simple and elegant example of how student affairs can take the lead in fostering a caring campus community.

Emerging theoretical perspectives may offer promise in informing efforts to promote campus cultures and climates that reduce the risk of occurrences of violence. The work being done by Jason Laker (2003) and others focusing on better understanding and addressing constructions of masculinities is particularly salient given that much of the violence experienced on campuses and in communities is perpetrated by men. Programs delivered by men that focus on violence can be very effective. Innovative approaches to conduct and discipline, such as James Madison University's Civic Learning program, might be helpful in engaging isolated or alienated students in the campus community in ways that reduce the potential for future incidents of antisocial behavior, including acts of campus violence. Similarly, alternative approaches to conflict resolution such as healing circles and efforts drawing on the work being done on bullying can be incorporated by student affairs into programs and services designed to help prevent or mitigate campus violence.**

In addition to fostering a campus culture of care and making use of emerging theoretical perspectives, it is critically important that student affairs staff continue to provide leadership in addressing the use of alcohol and other drugs in communities. There is ample evidence of the link between alcohol and drug use and individual incidents of campus violence. We argue that a campus susceptible to individual acts of violence and where such acts are seen as a part of community life are more vulnerable to critical acts of violence. In addition, there is an established comorbidity between the misuse or abuse of alcohol and other drugs and the types of mental health problems that appear to be associated with the perpetration of critical acts of violence. Student affairs can provide leadership in ensuring that the nexus between alcohol and substance misuse and abuse and campus violence is addressed. Practical examples of leadership in this area include ensuring that concerns regarding student behavior related to substance use are shared with campus threat assessment teams and campus education materials are disseminated that specifically identify acts of violence as unwelcome and unacceptable consequences of the misuse of alcohol and other drugs.

Case Example

Staff in Colorado State University's (CSU) counseling center and Student Affairs have implemented a creative program called Drugs, Alcohol and You (Day IV). DAY IV is a treatment program for students with chronic substance abuse problems and involves a team approach to assessing, treating, and tracking students of concern. Based upon a model called Back on TRAC (Treatment, Responsibility, and Accountability on Campus) introduced by Monchick and Gehring (2006), the program at CSU has shown great promise and effectiveness and has been well received on campus. Readers can learn more about CSU's program by visiting their website at: <http://day.colostate.edu/>

Prevention and mitigation efforts need to be informed by existing research and the scholarship of practice. We ought to draw on the lessons learned from colleagues in K–12 education who have also been forced to deal with violence, in particular by focusing on depression. We can also look to the work of colleagues in higher education. One interesting example is the work of Tom Workman (2007) and colleagues at the University of Houston in mapping incidents of violence on campus as a means to understanding violence on that campus and informing efforts to prevent or mitigate future incidents. Another example can be found in the remarkable example being offered by student affairs colleagues at Virginia Tech who have committed themselves to critical reflection and candor as they engage in the scholarship of practice by sharing their lessons learned. The willingness of these colleagues to share while still in their recovery is invaluable to our

profession in informing our thinking about how we can be leaders in the prevention and mitigation of violence on our campuses.

While some information is available and helpful insights are emerging, we still have many more questions than we do answers when it comes to individual or environmental variables that may influence the commission of violent acts on campus. Student affairs professionals should collaborate with colleagues on campus (faculty in public health, psychology, or sociology, for example) in addressing these questions. Similarly, NASPA and other student affairs professional associations should collaborate with higher education associations, governmental and nongovernmental agencies, and foundations to promote research agendas related to campus violence and make funding for those agendas available. Discussion should also be undertaken regarding the need and feasibility for a national clearinghouse for data on incidents of violence on K–12 and college campuses.

Training and Awareness. Promoting a caring campus culture, making use of emerging perspectives, reducing the likelihood of violence through minimizing alcohol and substance use, and taking advantage of research and the scholarship of practice require that all members of campus communities undertake appropriate training to develop the requisite knowledge and skills that can be drawn on in a crisis. All members of the campus community must become more aware of and vigilant regarding potential individual or environmental circumstances that might indicate a heightened propensity for violence. Here again, student affairs can and should play a lead role in organizing and presenting training opportunities and promoting the community responsibility of heightened awareness. Training and awareness programming related to campus violence should be offered to students, families of students, staff, faculty, and parents beginning at orientation and other welcome activities and repeated and reinforced regularly. Such training should include information on conflict management and the recognition of behavior that may indicate that an individual presents a risk to self or others. Many campuses have redesigned programs already in place to include this new focus.

Case Example

Many counseling centers have extensive liaison programs wherein counselors are assigned to various parts of the campus community, including residence halls, other Student Affairs offices, and academic programs. Northwestern University's Counseling and Psychological Services (NUCAPS), for example, has a liaison program. Staff members are assigned to a campus constituency and reach out to the areas to identify themselves and conduct needs assessments. The needs assessment may result in the development of programming for a specific area in identifying students in need, for example. NUCAPS
(continued)

liaisons are also heavily involved in various “gatekeeper” training programs, including, but not limited to, residence hall assistant training, new faculty and staff orientations, and new student week orientation programs. The premise behind gatekeeper training is that it is impossible to reach all students; therefore, training should focus on individuals in leadership or other roles who may come in contact with many students. NUCAPS liaisons are also “go-to” people for campus constituencies when there is concern about a specific student. To learn more about NUCAPS liaison system: <http://www.northwestern.edu/counseling/>

Students are often the victims of violence on campus; they are also in a unique position to prevent and mitigate violence. They interact with their peers more often and in more ways than do staff or faculty. Student affairs professionals need to offer training opportunities to help students recognize troubling behaviors in fellow students and in themselves that may indicate mental health issues that are potentially harmful to self and others. Training for students should include practical examples and clear advice. This can be done through a variety of formats including workshops, first-year seminars, Web-based materials, newspaper articles, and printed materials. Students need to be encouraged to share concerns regarding troubling behavior by peers and provided information on resources to contact to share those concerns.

Faculty may encounter troubling behavior in the classroom or evidence of troubled thinking in work submitted for assignments. Student affairs professionals can partner with colleagues in academic affairs, including those in teaching resource centers, to present workshop information for faculty in addressing troubling behavior in the classroom or troubling thinking in submitted assignments.

While it is important to make training available to members of the campus community to help them become more aware of and prepared for situations involving troubling behavior, it is equally important for resources to be available at the time such behavior is encountered. These resources should be provided in multiple media: pamphlets, quick help books, and Web pages, for example.

Campus security or police departments ought to be accredited wherever possible. Such accreditation provides a helpful framework for ensuring appropriate training and helps ensure that officers in the department have access to the latest information related to responding to incidents of violence on campus. The International Association of Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA) is one source for accreditation of campus safety and police departments. In addition, NASPA and IACLEA should continue to cosponsor joint conferences and trainings to provide up-to-date knowledge and skill development for both associations members.

Graduate preparation programs in student affairs and higher education should address issues of campus violence as well. Information on models of crisis management, grief and grieving, and ethical and legal dimensions of confidentiality as it relates to working with students who may be a risk to themselves or others are among the topics that need to be included in the training of future student affairs professionals. In addition, interdisciplinary courses that are team-taught by mental health professionals and deans of student affairs could explore case studies of campus psychological and safety issues.

Training is needed for staff, faculty, and graduate students working in higher education on the implications of FERPA and HIPAA concerning the well-being of students. While it is essential that this work be conducted according to the intent and letter of both pieces of legislation, neither prohibits well-informed professionals engaged in legitimate university business from sharing information related to protecting the health and safety of a student or members of the campus community. The recent clarification offered by the U.S. Department of Education has been particularly helpful in making this clear with regard to FERPA.** Similar training should be developed related to the Clery Act, which requires colleges and universities to keep and disclose information about crime on and near campus. Staff, faculty, and graduate students in preparation programs should receive training on broader legal issues of negligence and liability as they relate to working with students whose behavior is troubling. The legal counsel staff on campus could serve in the training and teaching roles.

Mental and Behavioral Interventions. Those of us who are privileged to serve students on college campuses know that student behavior can raise our hopes and our hackles, sometimes all in the same moment. Students do not always behave in ways we would hope they would or that we believe they should. Unusual or challenging behavior may be indicative of a learning opportunity in waiting, or it could be a sign of an underlying mental health issue. Following is a model for considering the latter type of behavior and a mechanism for addressing such behavior:

AISP model. Ursula Delworth's (1989) assessment-intervention of student problems (AISP) model offers a particularly useful framework for considering student behavior. The AISP suggests that students' behaviors that have raised campus safety concerns be categorized or identified in the categories of disturbed or disturbing, or both. Examples of disturbed behavior are a student muttering while walking across campus, a student whose hygiene noticeably deteriorates for little or no reason, or a student who quickly becomes frustrated and agitated when encountering innocuous questions as part of a routine process. These behaviors move toward disturbing when the muttering includes threats to self or others, the hygiene indicates a lack of cleanliness that presents a health threat to roommates, or agitation results in a member of the campus community feeling harassed or unsafe in some way or disrupts the campus community in some other manner.

How can and should a campus handle reports of troubling student behavior? Who should be charged with determining whether such behavior is indicative of immaturity, idiosyncrasy, or illness? Who will monitor behavior with an eye toward distinguishing between disturbed and disturbing? These issues can be addressed through the establishment of a behavioral intervention or threat assessment team.

Case Example

Dunkle, Hollingsworth, Barr, Crady and Duncan conducted a pre-conference workshop at the NASPA conference in Tampa (2005) that focused on dealing with disturbed/disturbing students. The presenters recommended that institutions conduct a thorough assessment of their campus resources to determine what they have to aid in managing these types of situations. Resources that were offered to attendees include the two flow charts in Appendix C.

Threat assessment team. While many campuses have long had in place an informal network of colleagues who work together to identify and address troubling situations involving students, the time to rely on informal systems has passed. Colleges and universities should implement formal threat assessment teams to identify and address situations in which the behavior of students (or other members of the campus community) indicates they may be experiencing difficulty in functioning or may be a threat to self or others. This team can have many different names (for example, behavior intervention team; we chose threat assessment team to reflect current common practice).

A threat assessment team should include, at a minimum, professionals in student affairs, mental health, law enforcement, and legal affairs. Other representatives from a particular academic area and other offices (for example, health services, campus clergy, campus library, registrar's office) might join the team for a particular case where troubling behavior may have been observed. The team should meet on a regular basis, perhaps once a month, and more often as needed.

The threat assessment team reviews reports of troubling behavior. Their ensuing discussion might include (1) developing a fuller understanding of how an individual is interacting with the university community, (2) identifying existing points of communication and support, and (3) developing an action plan for following through to determine whether additional steps (consistent with ethical and legal practices) should be taken to respond to the situation.

Throughout, the distinction between disturbed and disturbing behavior ought to guide the committee's discussion. As the assessment of the behavior moves along the continuum from disturbed to disturbing, the

courses of action and the role played by various members of the threat assessment team will vary. A preoccupation with violent imagery may be disturbed behavior, and additional information and appropriate follow-through may be required. Residence hall staff, members of the faculty, campus ministry staff, and others may be enlisted for their assistance in additional conversation with the student and monitoring of the student's behavior. Activity indicating the capacity for or interest in engaging in violence lies further along the continuum between disturbed and disturbing behavior, and a more aggressive and immediate assessment and appropriate intervention might be necessary. Mental health professionals and staff in the office of the dean of students might take more of a leading role at this point. Any indication of an intent to commit violence is clearly disturbing behavior, and an urgent response (consistent with ethical practice, institutional policy, and guiding legal precedent) is imperative. Law enforcement officials, legal counsel, and more senior student affairs officers will most likely take on prominent roles in such situations.

An individualized assessment of each situation and student needs to take place. We cannot base our actions on the generalizations, fears, hearsay, or prejudices that exist on the campus or in the larger society. We must focus on the conduct or behavior that the particular student is experiencing.

When there is significant concern regarding troubling student behavior, contact with parents and family members should be made as early in the process as possible so they can partner in working with their student and the institution. The U.S. Department of Education clarified FERPA guidelines in October 2007,** highlighting that FERPA does permit officials in an emergency situation to disclose information to protect the health and safety of students. This may include disclosing information to parents and family members.

The goal in developing a threat assessment protocol is early intervention to help ensure the health, safety, and success of the individual and other members of the campus community. As such, the development of a team is an act of caring, as are the activities of that team, including the team's decision to share information with appropriate members of the campus community on a need-to-know basis or with a student's family.

Case Example

An extensive and detailed model of a campus Threat Assessment Team is provided by Concordia University. A copy of the Threat Assessment Team can be downloaded at: http://www.cuw.edu/tools/resources/asja_ss90/ASJAThreatProtocol.pdf

Infrastructure and Policy. Campuses should undertake a discussion of whether they wish to implement background checks in admissions or hiring decisions to help ensure campus safety. Many campuses currently use some

form of background check, for example, Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI).** Consideration should be given in such discussions as to the ethical, legal, and moral dimensions of the question. There appears to be no single guiding legal principle at this time for colleges in determining whether to conduct such checks. Issues to consider include whether institutions should adopt reference checks and how the information gleaned should be used.

Regarding the admissions process, colleges interested in implementing background checks should develop the program in ways that reflect care for the applicant's interest in pursuing education and in receiving appropriate support in pursuing that goal with the safety and security interests of the other members of the campus community. The focus in such checks as part of the admissions process should be on previous behavior rather than on a conviction, whether misdemeanor or felony. Colleges may also wish to explore adding a question to the application regarding behavior at the high school level for which the applicant was suspended or expelled.

Institutions should not seek mental health information from applicants before they are admitted to the institution because such a process may invite the possibility of claims of discrimination based on disability. However, colleges may be able to collect such information from admitted students as part of health records information. Caution should be taken to ensure that information collected for health records is handled in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal laws.

Policies should be put in place addressing how situations involving members of the campus community in distress will be handled, and those policies should be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with effective models of practice and emerging legal guidance. Examples include policies on administrative withdrawals for students in crisis, refunds for students who must administratively withdraw, and conditions and processes under which such students may return to campus.

Campuses should make it a matter of policy that staff and faculty members acting in good faith, and in an effort to comply with applicable law and policy, should err on the side of caution by sharing more information rather than less when a matter relates to campus safety. Furthermore, it should be a matter of policy that staff and faculty members who do so will be supported by the institution in the event of legal action.

Although FERPA and HIPAA do not inhibit student affairs professionals and others in higher education from sharing information in the interest of individual or community safety, some local and state mental health laws have had that unintended consequence. While most state mental health laws are restrictive for very good reasons, most do provide for and even require breaching confidentiality to protect individuals from harming themselves or others. Student affairs administrators need training about their state mental health laws and should always work closely with legal counsel.

While it is important to maintain confidentiality to gain students' trust, it is equally important to protect the community. Furthermore, while mental health professionals may have their hands tied in terms of what they can share, there is a great deal that they can share and offer within the parameters of state laws and professional ethics. Colleges and universities should advocate for clarification or revision of local or state legislation that serves as an impediment to campus safety.

We recognize that there are divergent and strongly held opinions in the United States when it comes to firearms; nonetheless, we do not find any legitimate educational purpose for the presence of firearms on campus with the exception of those being carried by law enforcement officers. If a college or university has a safety or sworn police force, the decision as to whether those officers are armed ought to include the opportunity across campus to comment on the question.

Campuses should clarify their authority to restrict firearms on campus and, wherever possible, they should do so. Institutions finding their authority to restrict firearms on campus limited should seek that authority. Campuses should encourage students who believe they need to have a hunting rifle available to them to store those weapons at secure off-campus locations. With the exception of law enforcement offices, campuses where firearms are permitted should ban concealed firearms. Whatever their policy regarding firearms, institutions should review how campus gun policies are communicated and enforced with the goal of maximizing compliance.

This first phase of the crisis management process is to attempt prevention of a potential crisis or to mitigate the impact of a crisis should it occur. In order to prevent or mitigate the impact of campus violence, administrators need to address the campus climate and culture around violence and provide appropriate training and educational programs for students, faculty, and staff. In addition, behavioral intervention systems, such as a threat assessment team, need to be established for early identification of individuals who could pose a threat to the campus community and appropriate intervention. Finally, institutional infrastructure and policy, including the use of background checks and clear restrictions of firearms from campus, help to build a solid foundation from which institutions can prevent or mitigate campus violence.

Preparedness

Not all acts of campus violence can be prevented. Therefore, care must be taken to prepare student affairs staff and campus communities to respond to such violence. The second stage of an emergency planning model addresses preparation: thinking through contingencies, preparing for various types of situations, and practicing with campus partners. Student affairs staff must play a lead role in preparing the campus to avoid acts of violence

or responding appropriately if they do occur. They have the necessary experience, skills, and training to manage these complex processes and supervise many of the key areas linked to major campus crises.

During the preparedness phase of crisis management, campuses develop plans, assemble teams, and train personnel to respond to a variety of crisis events. Several considerations are key as we look at managing campus crisis, violence in particular.

Role of the President. In times of crisis, it is important to have a clear understanding of roles, responsibilities, and expectations. This is particularly true as it relates to the expectations of the president or chancellor (we use president here). How does the President see his or her role in responding to a campus crisis? What are the president's expectations of student affairs staff and others within the administrative structure of the campus community? The management plan that is developed needs to carefully consider the expectations of the president and the roles and responsibilities he or she will assume in an actual crisis event. This is a conversation that needs to take place early in the preparedness phase of the crisis management process.

As the chief executive officer of the institution, the president will play a central role in any campus crisis; however, his or her actual level of involvement may differ based on the size and type of institution, the nature of the crisis, and his or her individual personality. Depending on the campus, it might be logical for the president to chair the campus crisis management team and coordinate the specific actions taken to respond to a crisis event. If the president does not chair the crisis management team, he or she should nevertheless be at the table. The president will have to make some critical and major decisions during a crisis, and involving him or her in planning will minimize the possibility that he or she will decide something that could do damage to the plan or the university.

On some campuses, the direction of the crisis management team and the responsibility for implementing particular action steps to a crisis event may be delegated to another individual within the institution. Usually this is the provost or the vice president for administrative finance. This person would have the appropriate level of authority to act on behalf of the president but would also inform, consult, and advise the president on significant issues within the response process that require a decision.

In either case, it is important that the chair of the crisis management team be available to participate regularly in training sessions and campus crisis exercises. Efficient and effective operations in times of crisis require that considerable time be devoted to training and practice.

Another aspect that frequently influences the president's level of involvement in the campus crisis management team is that of institutional spokesperson. In extreme crisis situations, the president is the primary spokesperson for the institution. He or she must be accessible and visible to the media, campus community, and institutional constituents. Successfully performing this

role can often conflict with the responsibilities of coordinating the specific actions of the crisis management team.

Senior student affairs officers, as well as other senior campus administrators, would be wise to explore these issues with their president well in advance and ensure these expectations are factored into any plans or protocols that are developed.

Campus Police/Security. In addition to the president and other senior-level administrators, the chief of police or director of campus security needs to be a key player in institutional decision making during an incident of campus violence. Campus security has been trained to respond to these types of situations and therefore needs to be integrally involved in the process.

After the Virginia Tech tragedy, one of the primary criticisms was that campus police did not lock down the campus immediately after the initial shootings in West Ambler Johnston residence hall. Lockdowns may be standard practice in high school and other secondary education facilities, but they may not be feasible on a college campus. First, it is important to recognize that college campuses consist of individuals of majority age, not minors. People come and go freely on college campuses. They do not need a hall pass, and no one takes attendance every morning to see which students are on campus. Second, college campuses are open environments; guests to campus do not sign in and out at the office and receive a visitor's pass. Many campuses are open to the public and offer public forums for dialogue and debate on societal issues. Third, the size of many campuses makes the idea of a lockdown impractical. With acres of land, hundreds of buildings, and thousands of students, faculty, and staff, many campuses are like small cities. Law enforcement typically does not attempt to lock down a city when a shooting or other violent act occurs. Instead, police establish appropriate perimeters and secure specific buildings and sections of the city, and individuals within residential and office buildings are told to shelter in place. This is the approach that campus police needs to take with college campuses, and the rest of the members of the campus community need to be properly trained in such an approach.

Even without locking down a campus, the resources of most campus security departments will be stretched when perimeters are established and buildings or sections of campus are secured. For these reasons, campus police must develop partnerships and cooperative agreements with other agencies. Whether a campus has a security department or a licensed law enforcement agency, an important part of the preparedness phase will be the development of mutual aid agreements with city, county, and state police agencies. These agreements define the types of situations in which aid will be rendered, the level of response to be provided, and any compensation that is to be provided for these services. In addition to local law enforcement agencies, it is important to establish lines of communication with area representatives from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

In addition to significantly increasing an institution's response capabilities to incidents of campus violence, developing cooperative relationships with other agencies will also provide campus personnel with more opportunities for training. Participating in joint exercises and drills is a valuable training tool that will help to ensure a coordinated response in the event of a campus emergency. Furthermore, participation in such training exercises may assist institutions in obtaining compliance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS), a nationwide template to coordinate governmental and nongovernmental entities during domestic emergencies. State, territory, tribal, and local governments must comply with all NIMS requirements. Colleges and universities receiving federal preparedness grants or having law enforcement personnel who would play a direct role in emergency response are required to participate in NIMS training (FEMA, 2007). Additional information concerning NIMS and NIMS Training is available in Appendix B.**

Communications Plan. Under the Clery Act, campus administrators have a legal duty to provide the campus community with a timely warning when they believe a situation poses a threat to students or employees. Two difficult questions must first be answered: (1) When does a situation pose a threat? and (2) What is considered timely? In the aftermath of the Virginia Tech tragedy, there has been much debate about the concept of a timely warning. More recent incidents at Delaware State, University of Chicago, and Louisiana State University have continued to fuel this debate.

Identifying the criteria that a campus will use to determine whether a situation poses a significant and imminent threat is something that administrators must define well in advance of an actual crisis situation. If such a warning is to be timely, there is typically not an opportunity to bring together a variety of stakeholders to evaluate the situation. Instead basic criteria should be identified that would trigger issuing such a warning, and authority for making the decision to issue such warning needs to be assigned within the institution. Such authority needs to be high enough within the institutional hierarchy to consider all of the institutional concerns, yet at an appropriate level to be operationally effective. For a large university campus with its own police agency, this might be the chief of police; at a smaller institution lacking a law enforcement component, it might be the dean of students.

The manner in which such warnings are communicated to the campus community also must be thought through in advance. In the past year, a considerable amount of attention has been devoted to text messaging systems. Yet campus administrators need to be careful not to be lulled into thinking that there is one magic solution for effectively communicating warnings to the campus community. Communication systems need to be multimodal and can include mechanisms such as e-mail, Web sites, fax transmissions, radio and television broadcasts, public address systems, sirens and horns, reverse

911 systems, phone trees, and word of mouth, in addition to text messaging. It is crucial that administrators understand both the benefits and limitations of each mechanism and build redundancy into whatever system they choose for their campus. For example, although text messaging has the benefit of delivering messages quickly, the system may be severely limited if accurate cell phone numbers are available for only a fraction of the campus. Depending on the nature of the message, time of day, and circumstances surrounding the incident, some mechanisms may have advantages over others for communicating a warning in an effective and timely manner.

In addition to how the warning will be communicated, it is also essential to spend time planning what the warning will say. Warnings must be clear and concise. In addition to notifying the campus community that a dangerous situation exists, communicated messages should offer constituents a suggested course of action, and not create a panic. Depending on the mechanism used to communicate the warning, there may be limitations in the content and length of the message that can be issued. Developing some templates for campus warnings appropriate for each mechanism in a communications system is an important task to be completed in the preparedness phase of the crisis management process.

Special Consideration in Mass Casualty Situations. Campus violence is always a difficult situation to deal with, and it is even more so with mass casualties. Then the communications issues and challenges increase exponentially. From identification of victims to notification of next of kin, student affairs professionals may play a key role in assisting emergency personnel and supporting the friends and family of those who are affected, directly and indirectly, by the incident. With this in mind, we encourage student affairs professionals to prepare for several special considerations concerning communications in the event of an incident with mass casualties.

One key consideration is communication with the family members of the individuals who may be affected by the incident. A successful strategy that some institutions have used is to establish a family room: a designated location on campus where family members of the individuals involved in the incident can gather with appropriate university personnel and receive information, assistance, and support. The room must be easy to find for individuals who may not be familiar with the campus. In addition, the room needs to be an area to which access can be easily controlled so that family members can interact with campus personnel in relative privacy and away from the media.

In mass casualty events, some institutions have found it helpful to assign each family a specific university staff member who is not a department head. This individual serves as a liaison between the university and the family and is a primary conduit for communication. This approach tends to personalize the university's response to the crisis and allows the institution to address individual family needs and concerns. Those assigned to these roles should

be carefully selected and receive specific training. The family room may be staffed by family liaisons as well as counselors and clergy of several denominations, if possible, to provide assistance and support for family members. Another possibility is to involve the local Red Cross chapter in assuming primary or partial responsibility for working with families. Determining in advance what combination of resources is available to the campus is an important step in being prepared to respond appropriately.

Another key consideration is the university's information hotline or rumor control center. University operators and switchboards will be overwhelmed in many types of crisis events, yet the need to respond in a coordinated manner and provide accurate and informed information is significantly heightened. Family and parents typically seek information from offices and individuals with whom they are used to communicating, such as orientation offices, parent programs, the dean of students, the division of student affairs, or some combination of these. Often in such situations, call volumes can overload traditional communication systems within buildings or whole segments of a campus. For this reason, an information hotline should be housed independent of the institution's emergency operations center. Identification of such communication centers and a toll-free telephone number provide the opportunity to communicate information to parents and family through orientation and newsletters well in advance of any crisis situation.

Case Example

The University of Florida created a wallet-size Emergency Notifications card that is distributed to student and family members at orientation. The card provides students and their families with the main university web address, a toll-free emergency hotline number, as well as local television and radio stations used to broadcast emergency announcements. An example of the card can be viewed at <http://dso.ufl.edu/CRT/>

Many campuses have established call centers in admissions or development offices. These facilities are well equipped to manage large call volumes as well as to coordinate and share information within the unit. With advanced planning, these call centers can be adapted quickly to serve as the information hotlines during a crisis. With some additional training, student affairs personnel may be ideal to assist in staffing these centers.

Media. Few other events generate the level of media attention that campus violence does. Regardless of whether the campus is in a metropolitan or rural area, satellite trucks, helicopters, and other mobile media units can descend remarkably quickly. For this reason, an important part of any communications plan needs to address the media. Some campuses have specific personnel, such as a university relations office, charged with coordinating the institution's response to the media. Even if this is the case,

student affairs professionals should nevertheless be familiar with a number of media issues.

The most significant issue is determining who will be the institutional spokesperson. Often this is the president, but it may also be a vice president or the director of university relations. If the incident is primarily a student matter, then the senior student affairs officer might be designated as the primary spokesperson. Each of these options needs to be explored during the preparedness phase, and a clear understanding of who will represent the university in what types of situations is important.

In addition to the primary institutional spokesperson, media personnel will want to speak to other individuals who can provide additional perspectives to a story. If these individuals can be provided to the media on the front end, it gives the institution the opportunity to select people who can best tell the institution's story rather than having the media identify these people on their own. Specifically the people the media will be interested in talking to will vary depending on the situation, but some common spokespersons can be identified in developing a communications plan; for example, police or security personnel, housing personnel, activities staff, counseling staff, and students.

Media personnel will be extremely interested in getting student reactions to the incident of campus violence and institutional responses. Discussing with key student leaders, such as the student body president and residence hall and Greek letter organization leaders, who might serve as a spokesperson in times of crisis is an important part of crisis preparedness. Once the various spokespersons are identified, all should be provided appropriate media training.

Also of importance is determining appropriate areas in which media may operate. In some situations, a press room can be designated. This could be a location where institution spokespersons can provide regular press briefings and media personnel can congregate and prepare their stories. With regular and frequent press briefings, media personnel will want to stay close by so as not to miss any important information released by the institution.

In establishing a press room, administrators should give consideration to where the emergency response center, family room, and other key offices are located so as to facilitate communication and avoid interference or distractions. It is also important to identify media-free zones and set appropriate boundaries for the media so that members of the campus community are not constantly under the scrutiny of the cameras. The family room, residence hall facilities, dining halls, classrooms, and staff break rooms are typical areas that could be designated as media free.

Academic Affairs and Faculty. Although faculty members are sometimes overlooked in campus crisis management, they are key constituents who need to be part of the planning process. New-faculty orientation and ongoing faculty development programs need to clarify faculty roles, responsibilities, and expectations in crisis situations. For example, faculty members

need to be instructed in what steps or actions they should take in the classroom during an active shooter situation. What are the best options for protecting themselves and their students in such situations?

Faculty members are often the first to identify students who are troubled or in distress. They should have information and resources available to them concerning the identification of these students, along with names and phone numbers of emergency response team members they should contact, and how to make referrals.

Case Example

Staff at the University of Central Florida have created the “Faculty 911 Guide.” This resource is a red folder that serves as a handy reference guide for faculty and includes important telephone numbers, a process flow-chart, relevant university policies, and a list of frequently asked questions concerning students in distress. (A copy of the guide can be downloaded at <http://osc.sdes.ucf.edu/docs/Faculty911Guide/BinderFaculty911Combined.pdf>.)

It is also important to consult with faculty when developing crisis response procedures. For example, text messaging can be part of a communications plan for issuing timely warnings, yet it is not uncommon for faculty to request students to turn off and put away their cell phones during class. As student affairs professionals, we often recommend this approach as a best practice during tests and exams to reduce the likelihood of cheating. This example reinforces the notion that warnings need to be delivered through multiple mechanisms, and it also illustrates the importance of obtaining faculty perspectives on the plans and procedures being developed.

Faculty need to be brought into the crisis management process at all levels. Not only should they be consulted in the planning process, but they should also be a key component of communications plans. Careful consideration should be given as to how communication with them in times of crisis will take place and what messages need to be conveyed.

Training. Of all aspects of the preparedness phase, training is perhaps the most important component. Plans and protocols may be developed and well thought out, but they are of little benefit if training is lacking. Team members need to be trained in detail on all plans and protocols and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in a crisis event. Lectures and discussions can be useful in training staff and faculty, but the most effective way to prepare is to practice.

A table-top exercise is a simple yet effective way for team members to practice the plan. In this process, team members are assembled and presented with a set of facts about a crisis event. Beginning with the team

leader, each member of the team describes what actions or steps he or she would take. At the beginning of such an exercise, the facts are usually very basic and may prompt more questions than answers. Once everyone has shared his or her initial action steps, additional information is provided about the crisis event, and team members describe additional actions or steps they would take. The process of gradually providing more information and having team members respond is typically repeated two or three times and attempts to mirror how a crisis unfolds. Once the process is completed, the team can debrief to identify what went well, as well as what aspects of the plan need further development. It is not uncommon for such table-top exercises to be conducted related to natural disasters, such as hurricane or tornados, but it is equally important for campuses to use this training tool to prepare for potential types of campus violence, including active shooter or terrorist threat scenarios.

Another effective means of team training is through simulation: a full-scale reproduction or role play of a crisis event. Simulations require a significant amount of preplanning and preparation, as well as the involvement and cooperation of a variety of constituents across the campus and community. Typically partnering can be done with local law enforcement agencies or other city or county agencies to participate in such exercises. Most agencies conduct a simulation exercise at least annually, including active shooter and terrorist threat scenarios.

Training should not be limited to crisis management team members. The rest of the campus community also needs to be familiar with the basics of the institution's crisis management plan and how to respond should an event occur. Each unit within the institution has a role and plays a part in how a campus responds in times of crisis. From the administrative assistant to the president, everyone should understand his or her part.

A variety of units in student affairs will have significant roles in crisis events. Each of these units can carry out its own training sessions, including table-top exercises. It is also important to be sure that students are included in these training sessions and exercises. Housing, Greek life, student activities, and recreational sports departments all rely on a large number of student staff who need appropriate training in crisis response.

Preparations to respond to an incident of campus violence require that all members of the campus community have a clear understanding of their roles and receive appropriate training. The institution's president plays a key role in responding to campus crisis, and having a solid understanding of how he or she will interact with the crisis management team and other units in the response effort is essential. Campus police/security needs the training, equipment, and resources to deal with active shooter and large-scale emergency scenarios. Every faculty member also has a role to play in the response process and must be provided with the appropriate training and resources to respond should an incident take place. In addition to preparing personnel,

campuses need well-developed plans and protocols, particularly regarding communications and the media. Such plans need to address the difficult yet essential considerations that arise when there are mass casualties.

Response

Moving into response mode in the appropriate manner will be more easily accomplished with the preparation and planning already done. Responding to high-stress situations will place enormous demands on all levels of staff in student affairs and across the rest of the institution. Practice with various scenarios will enable staff to be more comfortable with their roles and to draw on their experience and knowledge of resources. Responding in most situations will come naturally, and many incidents demand rapid decision making and action.

Timely Notification. Tension exists between being timely in notifying the campus of a dangerous situation or an impending threat and getting the facts straight before putting out such an alert. Students, their parents, and the general public, however, are demanding that campuses notify them immediately of any danger on the campus. Clearly, the emerging trend is early notification. According to recent changes under the Higher Education Act and the Clery Act, colleges must have procedures to notify the campus community immediately on confirmation of a significant emergency. Although each situation is different and requires a unique response, we need to err on the side of sending a brief, factual message with as much information as possible and directing people to a Web site for more detailed updates. Another emerging trend is to have the message to the campus be crafted and sent out in the most timely way possible by the staff members who have access to the technology at the time of the day to complete the action. This will vary by campus and may be done through a variety of different mechanisms. Examples of such messages may include:

- “Shooting at library—please stay away from building. Check Web site for more information.”
- “Tornado warning for Orange County. Shelter in place.”

While a brief, factual message is appropriate for the initial notification, it is essential to follow up this message with more detailed information as quickly as possible. When communicating with the campus community about a crisis event, administrators should not only explain what has taken place but advise campus community members on what actions they should take. No single system should be relied on for such communications. Instead, institutions should use multiple methods of notification.

Our responsibility in the response stage is to manage communications as we prepare to supply spokespersons with factual information; provide appropriate updates to families, the community, and the media in a timely way; and

be as sensitive and caring as possible in all communications. The sooner the most senior administrator can speak to the media, as well as the family members and victims, the better. The senior student affairs officer should always be present with the president or other senior officer addressing the media.

Student affairs staff play a critical role in responding to situations by providing a link between the threat assessment team and the student body. In responding to incidents of concern on campuses, the general practice of not involving parents has shifted as a result of October 2007 clarification by the U.S. Department of Education that FERPA does allow officials to disclose information to parents in an emergency.** The continuum has also moved to include sharing more information across campus administrative units on a need-to-know basis through a threat assessment team, enabling senior administrative leaders to make decisions.

In the emergency response plan, each student affairs staff member should know and understand his or her role in responding to an incident. In a major incident, particularly one of violence with a wide impact on the campus, the student affairs leadership team should meet and talk as soon as possible to assess the needs within the division and student body. In addition, it is important to understand the emotional needs of the staff in the division.

In the age of instant communication, we in student affairs need to be much more comfortable with the pace of rapid response decision making and communication. We no longer have the luxury of taking hours or days to process every possible scenario before moving forward. We need to become more agile in our ability to move forward and have more confidence in ourselves and our colleagues, knowing reasonable decisions are made based on knowledge, experience, ethics, wisdom, laws, and policies.

Responding to the Needs of Students. One primary role of student affairs staff is to help manage the shock and pain of a tragic incident for affected individuals or groups. Our role in student affairs is to pay attention to the psychological needs of everyone involved and provide mental health first aid where necessary. We know from our experience with posttraumatic stress disorder on campus that people exhibit varying types and degrees of reactions. Providing an array of options for community members seeking assistance around mental health issues is important.

Case Example

Grand Valley State University's (GVSU) Counseling and Career Development Center offers Critical Incident Response Services to its campus in the aftermath of various types of crisis events. These services are based on Everly and Mitchell's (1997) Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Model. CISM is a comprehensive and multi-modal system for crisis intervention. The beauty of this model is that staff and faculty at all levels can be trained to carry

(continued)

out the interventions and to serve on a critical incident response team. Periodic trainings are offered to colleges and universities. Readers can learn more about the approach and training opportunities at the following website for the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation: <http://www.icisf.org/>. Readers are also directed to GVSU's Counseling and Career Development Center to learn more about its Critical Incident Response Services: <http://www.gvsu.edu/counsel>.

Many institutions have agreements to assist another campus in an emergency. We should consider in advance the feasibility of immediate response to a significant tragedy that would require relocating some staff and providing housing, food, and transportation. For counseling professionals, issues of practicing in another state may be an issue. However, we encourage consortium agreements to be worked out in advance by state or region of the country that can be activated immediately. Another source of support could be available from the employee assistance program. This office may be able to redirect staff to serve the needs of students or other members of the campus community.

We should also review our relationships and agreements with local clergy and religious organizations. For institutions without religious groups on campus, students and other community members may benefit from having the presence of faith-based organizations, in conjunction with student affairs staff, in separate events and spaces throughout the response and recovery phases of an event.

International: Crisis Abroad. In this age of increased study abroad and personal travel, many students and faculty are participating in academic and personal experiences in other countries, and they may find themselves in dangerous or violent situations while they are abroad. The student affairs office is often the point of contact to reach out to the students who are involved and their family members and determine a course of action to assist in whatever ways are possible. It may be necessary for a representative of the college to travel immediately to the country to assess the situation. One or more staff members in the dean of students office should be prepared with an up-to-date passport and other information to travel abroad immediately. Access to cell phones and technology that will work overseas is also helpful to plan in advance.

The response phase of the crisis management process occurs when all the plans and training are put into action. Central to this phase is the importance of notifying the campus community in a timely manner that an incident has occurred and advising people on actions to take to protect themselves. Although attention will be focused on responding to those who are directly involved in the incident, it is also important to address the needs of others indirectly affected by the situation, staff as well as students.

Recovery

The process of recovery from an episode of violence is long and complex. Many people need various types of support to reach a new normal. The campus community and the microcommunity for those most affected will be permanently changed by the experience.

Moving On. Student affairs staff need to reach out to several other key groups in the aftermath of a serious incident on campus. Student leaders and student groups connected to the event need particular attention and perhaps coaching on how to interact with the media or other parties. Alumni must be kept updated through the institution's Web site, and some alumni may be useful in the response or recovery process given their profession. The college should consider soliciting their constructive involvement.

The timeliness of events to come together, realizing the symbolic nature of events, is critical to helping a community and individuals move through stages of grief. Memorials, vigils, and then the anniversaries of tragedies must be planned carefully. For example, by the opening of the fall semester 2007, Virginia Tech had constructed a permanent memorial on the drill field to those who died. The university also sought to address the needs of incoming first-year students in the fall by providing a positive experience of their new life at college in spite of what happened the previous spring.

Psychological First Aid. Attention should be given to the student affairs team, as well as counterparts from across campus, to deal with their own psychological and emotional trauma associated with any crisis event, particularly campus violence. They should be encouraged to acknowledge their emotions and obtain assistance, as well as learn how to support the staff and frontline people who have been pushed beyond their normal capacity. It may be necessary to draw on significant resources in the community, such as victim advocates and other ongoing support groups.

Process and Learning from the Incident. Each situation provides opportunities for learning. This can come from debriefing on campus, as well as from outside entities so that we can continue to improve our practice. Approaching these situations with transparency will enable everyone to move forward.

It will be important to continue to update information available to the public and students, especially on the university Web site.

It is important to pay attention to the differences in dealing with trauma. Everyone heals differently and on different schedules. Having a variety of ongoing support mechanisms and experiences in which people can participate will assist community members in finding the help they need.

It is possible to take a tragic situation and turn it into an opportunity not just to rebuild what was there but to create new traditions. It may be possible to build something better, or perhaps just different from what was part of the campus culture before.

In the aftermath of the tragedy at Virginia Tech, new staff members were added in student affairs, and a new office was created to assist with the ongoing recovery process. Most campuses will not need to create a new office after a violent incident, but the idea of assigning the responsibility of recovery to one or more staff people full time is a helpful way to move forward.

Recovery must be part of a crisis management plan. The phases of the recovery process need to start in the response mode so that people are thinking in parallel: How will this look in a month or several months from now? The counseling staff should be included in the recovery stage in terms of providing direct support and processing what is needed for others and themselves.

One of the most difficult parts of moving forward is to figure out how to balance remembering with living the daily life of a college campus filled with the opportunity for learning, fun, celebration, and sports. Everyone recovers in his or her own time and way. Many students will want to go back to their normal lives of going to class, attending games, being involved in campus groups, and hanging out off campus. Others will remain fixed in the event or remembering people they have lost. It is the responsibility of student affairs professionals to care for all of these students and think about the specific needs they all might have, being sensitive to issues of space, timing of events, finishing classes, and the need for information, for example. We must remember to address and include all constituents in our recovery plan: alumni, community members, faculty, staff, parents, and others.

Debriefing. It is important to take time to review response activities in an open and nonjudgmental way during debriefings after the crisis. Identifying what worked and what did not needs to occur during these debriefings, and the information should be used to improve the protocols put into place for future incidents.

During the recovery phase of the crisis management process, the campus begins the long and difficult process of healing. Student affairs plays a key role in helping and supporting students through this complex process. By providing psychological first aid, we help students to normalize their feelings and emotions as well as connect those who need additional assistance with appropriate campus resources. The recovery phase is also a time to review our response and identify what worked well and what needs improvement.

Conclusion

Incidents of violence on college campuses are not new. What is new is the immediacy of the visual and emotional impact of violent acts due to the media and the Internet. Expectations of parents, legislative leaders, and society in general have changed, and as a result, colleges and universities have more responsibility to care for students and provide for their safety on campus. Due to the increase in the number of students on college campuses in the past few decades and the types of students who attend college today, student affairs

work has become more challenging. The intersection of laws and policies such as the ADA, HIPAA, and FERPA with our professional standards of practice has also caused confusion and concern. We have learned much, however, from the past few years of difficult situations on campuses.

Our emerging trends of professional practice in student affairs indicate that it will take a coalition of campus leaders on each campus to work through the issues presented here and in the other reports of the past year. We have been leading in the planning for, responding to, and recovering from acts of violence on campuses. We have models, such as those noted in this report, that we can look to as examples in determining standards of practice. And we have experience to draw on through our own campus lessons and those of our colleagues to continue to grow in our professional practice.

References

- Delworth, U. *Dealing with the Behavioral and Psychological Problems of Students*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989.
- Dunkle, J., Silverstein, Z., and Warner, S. "Managing Violent and Other Troubling Students: The Role of Threat Assessment Teams on Campus." *Journal of College and University Law*, May 2008.
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. National Integration Center. Incident Management Systems Division. *Frequently Asked Questions: Compliance*. 2007. Retrieved Jan. 20, 2008, from <http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/faq/compliance.shtm#5>.
- Harper, K., Paterson, B., Zdziarski II, E., eds. *Crisis Management: Responding From the Heart*. Washington, DC: NASPA, 2006.
- Laker, J. "Bad Dogs: Rethinking Our Engagement of Male Students. Men on Campus." ACPA College Student Educators International Standing Committee for Men. Minneapolis Conference, 2003.
- U.S. Department of Education. Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools. "Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide for Schools and Communities." 2007. Retrieved Jan. 12, 2008, from <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/crisisplanning.pdf>.
- Workman, T. A. "Addressing Violence on Campus: Five Lessons Learned from AOD." *NetResults On-Line Journal*, Dec. 2007.

APPENDIX A: CAMPUS VIOLENCE WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Editors:

Margaret “Peggy” Jablonski, vice chancellor for student affairs, chair, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

George McClellan, vice chancellor for student affairs, Indiana University, Purdue University Fort Wayne

Eugene Zdziarski, assistant vice president and dean of students, University of Florida

Contributing Authors/Group Members:

David Ambler, vice chancellor for student affairs emeritus, University of Kansas

Renee Barnett-Terry, dean of student affairs, Revelle College, University of California, San Diego

Les Cook, vice president for student affairs, Michigan Technological University

John H. Dunkle, executive director, counseling and psychological services, Northwestern University

Robert Gatti, vice president and dean for student affairs, Otterbein College

Elizabeth Griego, vice president for student life, University of the Pacific

Joan Kindle, vice president for student affairs, Harper College

Kari Lee Siko, graduate assistant, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

APPENDIX B: RESOURCES

- Best Practices for Making College Campuses Safe*. Full Committee Hearing of the Committee on Education and Labor, U.S. House of Representatives, May 15, 2007. <http://edlabor.house.gov/hearings/fc051507.shtml>
- “Campus Community Emergency Response Team Training.” C-Cert. MSU. <http://www.c-cert.msu.edu>. Information about the Campus Community Emergency Response train-the-trainer program for colleges and universities sponsored by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and developed by the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University.
- “Campus Violence White Paper.” American College Health Association. www.acha.org/info_resources/06_Campus_Violence.pdf
- Carr, J. L. (2005, February). American College Health Association campus violence white paper. Baltimore, MD: American College Health Association.
- “Complying with the Clery Act.” Security on Campus. www.securityoncampus.org/schools/cleryact. An overview of the Jeanne Clery Act and information and guidelines for campus compliance.
- Criminal Offender Record Checks. Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Public Health. <http://www.mass.gov/dph/topics/cori2/reg105cmr950.htm>. A law specific to Massachusetts regarding criminal record checks.
- Dunkle, J., Silverstein, Z., and Warner, S. “Managing Violent and Other Troubling Students: The Role of Threat Assessment Teams on Campus.” *Journal of College and University Law*, May 2008.
- Faculty 911 Guide*. University of Central Florida. <http://www.cohpa.ucf.edu/Facultyand-Staff.htm>. A resource provided to faculty containing important telephone numbers, a process flowchart, and questions and answers concerning identifying and referring students and university policies.
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa. Information about the act, including links to questions about compliance and a variety of online resources.
- Garrett, M. T., Garrett, J. T., and Brotherton, D. “Inner Circle/Outer Circles: A Group Technique Based on Native American Healing Circles.” *Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 2001, 26(1), 17–30.
- Greenberg, S. F. “Active Shooters on College Campuses: Conflicting Advice, Roles of the Individuals and First Responder, and the Need to Maintain Perspective.” *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness*, Sept. 1, 2007. Discusses prevention of shooters on campus, what to do when a shooting occurs, strategies for coping, and scenarios and dynamics for consideration.
- Harper, K., Paterson, B., Zdziarski II, E., eds. *Crisis Management: Responding From the Heart*. Washington, DC: NASPA, 2006.
- The Handbook for Campus Crime Reporting*. Security on Campus. www.securityoncampus.org/schools/cleryact/handbook.pdf. A guidebook defining the processes for campus crime reporting and compliance.
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa. Provides a variety of information relating to the details of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996.
- “Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5.” White House. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030228-9.html>. Memorandum from the White House that defines the establishment of a comprehensive national incident management system to enhance the ability of the United States to manage domestic incidents.
- “Infofacts Resources: Interpersonal Violence and Alcohol and Other Drug Use.” U.S. Department of Education. http://searchpubs.higheredcenter.org/files/product/fact_

- sheet4.html. A report on an assessment of those most affected by various types of interpersonal violence and the identification of risk factors in the campus environment that foster or perpetuate violence, such as alcohol use, fraternity hazing practices, and intolerance of individual differences.
- “Investigation of April 16, 2007, Critical Incident at Virginia Tech.” Virginia Office of the Inspector General for Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services. <http://www.oig.virginia.gov/documents/VATechRpt-140.pdf>. Report from the inspector general for mental health, mental retardation, and substance abuse services for Virginia on the April 16, 2007, shootings at Virginia Tech.
- Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law. www.bazelon.org. The Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law is an advocacy group and resource for advancing community membership, promoting self-determination, and preserving the rights of those with mental health challenges.
- Leadership Exchange*, Winter 2008, 5(4). Is Your Campus Ready? Crisis Management in a New Era. <http://www.leadershipexchangedigital.com/leadershipexchange/2008winter/>.
- “Threat Assessment on the College Campus,” by Dewey Cornell
 - “Identifying and Responding to Students with Mental Health Needs,” by Gregory T. Fells
 - “Managing the Media,” by Nancy Grund
 - “Liabilities” column
 - “Public Policy” column
 - “Websites to Watch” column
- “National Association of College and University Attorneys FERPA Guidance and FERPA Resources.” National Association of College and University Attorneys. <http://www.nacua.org/documents/ferpa1.pdf>. Resources and guidance on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act from the National Association of College and University Attorneys.
- National Incident Management System. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). www.fema.gov/emergency/nims. The home page of the FEMA National Integration Center for National Incident Management Systems (NIMS). The site provides a variety of resources and links. NIMS benefits include a unified approach to incident management, standard command and management structures, and an emphasis on preparedness, mutual aid, and resource management.
- “None of Our Business.” Wellstone. www.wellstone.org/swinstitute/article_detail.aspx?itemID=4542&catID=3801. DVD/Video and training guide designed to help employees learn about domestic violence, how to respond appropriately within the workplace, and identify workplace and community resources to support and protect those involved in domestic violence.
- Noddings, N. “Teaching Themes of Care.” *Phi Delta Kappan*, 1995, 76(9), 675. Retrieved Jan. 21, 2008, from <http://find.galegroup.com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/itx/start.do?prodId=AONE>. A resource that explains the concept of caring communities.
- “The Numbers Count: Mental Disorders in America.” National Institute of Mental Health, National Institutes of Health. www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/the-numbers-count-mental-disorders-in-america.shtml. A comprehensive Web site detailing the number and nature of mental disorders in the United States.
- Pavela, G. “School Shooting Copycats.” *Pavela Report*, Oct. 12, 2007. http://docs.google.com/Doc?id=dfdpvzp9_388djps6c. Insights and information about school shootings after the 1999 shootings at Columbine High School. This article provides information about patterns of behavior as well as pertinent research.
- Pavela, G. “Memorandum to the Faculty: Teaching Troubled Students After the Virginia Tech Shootings.” *Synfax Weekly Report*, May 14, 2007. <http://www.oja.wi.gov/docview.asp?docid=11741>. Question and answer guide directed to faculty immediately follow-

- ing the Virginia Tech shootings by recognized expert on how colleges can assist troubled students.
- Pavela, G. "Focus on Columbine." *Pavela Report*, Dec. 14, 2007. http://docs.google.com/View?docid=dfdpvzp9_474cpszg3fp. A follow-up article on Pavela's earlier "School Shooting Copycats." This article examines the value of threat assessment and factors that should be high on the list for intervention and evaluation.
- Pollack, W. S. "Male Adolescent Rites of Passage: Positive Visions of Multiple Developmental Pathways." *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 2004, 1036, 141, 150. An article focusing on the development of males.
- "Report from the National Summit on Campus Public Safety." Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), U.S. Department of Justice. 2004. <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/files/ric/Publications/NationalSummitonCampusPublicSafety.pdf>. Executive summary of the National Summit on Campus Public Safety held in 2004. The focus of the report is on collaboration, operating a safe campus, and strengthening operations and administrative functions that relate to campus safety.
- "Securing Your Campus." Paper-Clip. 2007. <http://www.paper-clip.com/ME2/Audiences/dirmod.asp?sid=&nm=&type=Commerce&mod=GenComProductCatalog&mid=BB900C9FBBC442A19C2B38D104F64A21&tier=3&id=01DAC1FB07864B02968BB7BA4956C742>. A white paper designed to provide ideas and practical suggestions for creating and maintaining an effective emergency response.
- "Supporting Students: A Model Policy for Colleges and Universities." Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law. <http://www.bazelon.org/pdf/SupportingStudents.pdf>. An article focusing on mental health issues.
- Twelmow, S. W., Fongay, P., and Sacco, F. C. "The Role of the Bystander in the Social Architecture of Bullying and Violence in Schools and Communities." *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 2004, 1036, 215–232. An article focusing on bullying and school violence.
- ULifeline. www.ulifeline.com. An online resource center for college student mental health and information about emotional well-being.
- "UNCG Cares." University of North Carolina at Greensboro. <http://deanofstudents.uncg.edu/uncgcares/>. A program that exemplifies student affairs taking the lead in creating a caring campus community.
- U.S. Department of Education. Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools. "Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide for Schools and Communities." 2007. Retrieved Jan. 12, 2008, from <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/crisisplanning.pdf>.
- Virginia Governor. *Virginia Tech Report*. 2007. www.governor.virginia.gov/TempContent/techPanelReport.cfm. The full report from the Virginia Tech Review Panel of the Virginia Tech tragedy. Includes chronology of events, responses, and summaries, as well as a variety of supplementary documents.

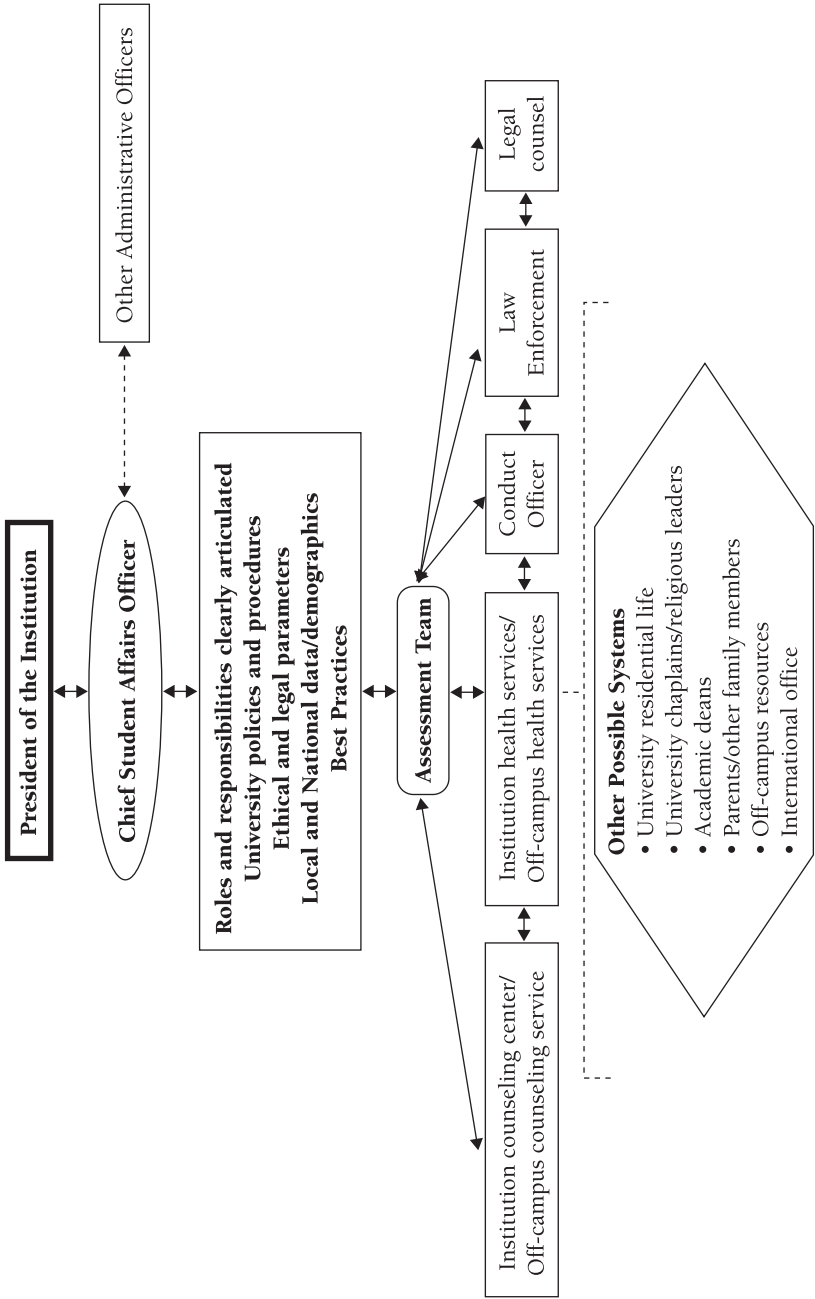
APPENDIX C: CHARTS FROM DUNKLE, SILVERSTEIN, AND WARNER (2008)

Disturbed/Disturbing Matrix

		Mental health concern: "Disturbed"*	
		YES	NO
Disruptive Behavior "Disturbing"*	YES	Disturbed/Disturbing	Disturbing
	NO	Disturbed	Neither

Note: * terms from Delworth (1989).

Team Approach: Managing Disturbed and Disturbing Students



Flowchart for Managing Disturbed and Disturbing Students

